



MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 Martin O'Malley, Governor • Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
 John D. Porcari, Secretary • Paul J. Wiedefeld, Administrator

February 5, 2008

Mr. Byrne H. Kelly
 President
 The Greenfields Company, Inc.
 307 Circle Avenue
 Takoma Park MD 20912

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Delegate Tom Hucker asked us to respond to a question you posed to him about the feasibility of a peak period MARC Train shuttle from Rockville to Silver Spring. The concept of a shuttle that would connect the two branches of the Red Line and two major business centers is a good one, but would be very difficult to implement in light of freight congestion on that section of track.

At the present time CSX Transportation operates more than 35 freight trains on the line each day. MARC operates nine inbound trains in the morning and 10 outbound trains in the afternoon. At certain points along the line the freight trains operate substantially slower than MARC trains due to grades and curves. Our operating agreement with CSX is based on the understanding that MARC trains will operate in only one direction at any time to leave the remaining track free for freight service and track maintenance.

Based on past discussions with CSX it is unlikely that they would allow additional MARC service without the construction of an additional track. Such a project would be difficult under the best of conditions, but construction through the historic communities of Kensington, Washington Grove and Gaithersburg would be especially difficult. In addition, the Brunswick Line parallels the Red Line for an extended distance, and the absence of available right-of-way would make the addition of an extra track very challenging. MTA's MARC Growth and Investment Plan does call for additional track capacity in the Rockville-Silver Spring corridor, but not until 2035. Given the other investment needs identified in the plan, this is unlikely to occur sooner.

